

2013 - 2014 Seattle City Council Statement of Legislative Intent

Ready for Notebook

Tab	Action	Option	Version
60	2	B	2

Budget Action Title: SOCR Review of Civil Rights Enforcement Process

Councilmembers: Clark; Harrell; O'Brien

Staff Analyst: Josh Fogt; Rebecca Herzfeld; Jeremy Racca

Date		Total	SB	BH	TR	RC	TB	NL	JG	SC	MO
	Yes										
	No										
	Abstain										
	Absent										

Statement of Legislative Intent:

The Council requests that Office of the City Auditor (OCA) review the investigation, enforcement and technical assistance functions of the Seattle Office for Civil Rights (SOCR) and report back to the Council.

The report should address the following issues:

1. Report on SOCR's allocation of staff resources dedicated to processing civil rights enforcement complaints and evaluate whether staffing levels are adequate to:
 - Meet legal standards for the investigation of charges of discrimination;
 - Reach settlements to resolve charges of discrimination;
 - Meet goals for turnaround times for each step in the process; and
 - Provide relevant information and technical assistance to businesses, including staff knowledgeable of business regulations and practices.
2. Examine enforcement models from other jurisdictions around the country, review SOCR existing practices, and present recommendations for:
 - Delivering objective investigation and enforcement of civil rights laws for both complainants and respondents;
 - Streamlining the processing of civil rights complaints without compromising the rights of complainants, including a review of the roles of SOCR, Seattle Human Rights Commission, the Law Department, and Hearing Examiner; and
 - Providing businesses and landlords the information, resources and skills to understand civil rights laws, avoid charges of discrimination by meeting these laws, and responding effectively if a complaint is filed.

Green Sheet 60-1-A-2 proposes to add a half-time Senior Planning and Development Specialist position in SOCR to provide additional outreach and technical support to the business community upon Council review of the report generated as a result of this Statement of Legislative Intent.

Responsible Council Committee(s): Public Safety, Civil Rights and Technology

Date Due to Council: June 30, 2013